

**AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111**  
**U. S. Application No. 09/372,049**

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Takaoka (US 6,693,718).

Since the foreign priority date (August 19, 1998) of the present application is prior to the U.S. filing date (May 28, 1999) of Takaoka, Applicant hereby removes the Takaoka reference by perfecting the foreign priority of the present application. Thus, Applicant is filing herewith a certified English translation of the foreign priority document. Since Takaoka is the only applied reference and is hereby removed, the rejection of all of the claims must be removed.

Applicant amends the specification to correct the noted typographical errors.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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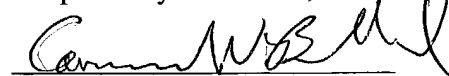
WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: November 16, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



Cameron W. Beddard  
Registration No. 46,545